

Laura Yuen, Minnesota Public Radio

St. Paul, Minn. - Downtown St. Paul's Union Depot is poised to secure an additional \$40 million toward its renovation into a major transportation hub.

U.S. Rep. Betty McCollum said the federal Department of Transportation will sign off this week on the grant, which is aimed at high-speed passenger rail projects around the country.

McCollum, a DFLer who represents St. Paul in Congress, said it's a good sign for local businesses and others in favor of high-speed rail service to Chicago.

"I can say it looks like the train is definitely moving in this direction," McCollum said. "It shows the commitment of the federal government to move forward with its high-speed rail plan throughout the United States, and now St. Paul, and the Twin Cities, is going to be a part of that."

Planners want to transform the building into a single site served by buses and trains. The station will be a stop on the Central Corridor light-rail line.

Construction of the \$237 million project is expected to begin in January, and to be completed at the end of 2012, but high-speed rail service is probably at least several years away.

The new grant will whittle the funding gap for the project to about \$63 million.